

Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
Floor Remarks for Debate on H.R. 45
May 16, 2013

Mr. Speaker, we are here to consider the 37th vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act. We are voting on a bill that rightly should be called “The Patients’ Rights Repeal Act.”

My Republican colleagues say they care about people with pre-existing conditions. They say they care about discriminatory practices in the insurance market. And they say they care about the deficit and the rising cost of health care.

But on the Affordable Care Act – the one bill that takes major steps forward on these issues the Republicans offer nothing but opposition and misleading attacks.

From the beginning, Republicans in Congress have said that this law will kill jobs by the millions, but we have added over 6.7 million new private sector jobs since we passed the law.

They have said that the law would drive health costs through the roof, but we have the slowest growth in health spending in decades.

And they have ignored the significant benefits the law is providing for tens of millions of people.

Some of the benefits we've seen already:

- 3 million young adults have coverage through their parents' plans;
- 6 million seniors have saved over \$6 billion on their prescription drugs;
- 13 million Americans have received over \$1 billion in rebates from their insurers;
- over 100 million Americans have access to free preventive care and no longer face lifetime limits on their coverage.

And CBO still confirms that the law cuts the deficit by \$100 billion in the first decade and by more than \$1 trillion in the second decade.

The Republican Patients' Rights Repeal Act undoes all these benefits. It dramatically adds to the deficit and sends us back to the days when insurance companies were in charge, costs were skyrocketing, and tens of millions either had no coverage or coverage they could not depend on. That's what their Patients' Rights Repeal Act is all about.

I had hoped that after the last election, we could work together to implement the law and make it work as effectively as possible. But Republicans in the House continue to offer no solutions; only opposition and misleading attacks.

Their attacks are simply not true. This law will be successfully implemented. 25 million Americans will gain quality, affordable coverage for the first time. The insurance market will become more fair and affordable. And years from now we will look back on these 37 repeal votes the same way we look at the opposition to Medicare and Social Security.

I urge a no vote on the legislation.